Newspapers by ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/390936130

Downloaded on Mar 25, 2024

Paper Weight

by JONATHAN KIRSCH

Like the Tarot deck itself, Barbara G. Walker's **The Secrets of the Tarot** (Harper & Row; $12.95) is a repository of "Arcana Major" or "Greater Secrets"—a rich, complex, illuminating, but almost dreamlike, conjuration of myth and magic. Indeed, Walker detects the reverberations of a thousand spirits and spiritual traditions in the 78 cards of the Tarot, everything from the cult of the Golden Calf to Tantric Buddhism. "There could hardly be found any more appropriate medium of such expression than the ancient myth-forms that nearly all people could understand," writes Walker, "each according to his or her own background, insight or education."

Walker traces the Tarot to the 9th-Century migration of Gypsies from India, where the unbound pages of holy books often took the form of a stack of illuminated cards. "Gypsies . . . adapted the Tarot to their repertoire of tricks, collectively called *hakkni-panki*, which passed into English as 'hanky-panky,'" she writes, displaying her persistent fascination with etymology as evidence of cultural cross-pollination. And she finds yet more evidence in the symbolism of the Tarot deck itself; for instance, Walker links the Magician card with Hermes, Osiris, Mithra, Tammuz, the Hindu Yama, the Persian Yima, "and other versions of the same savior figure"—including Jesus Christ.

Walker, author of "Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets," brings intellectual discipline and true belief to her book in roughly equal measure. On one hand, she discusses the spiritual esoterica of several millenniums with the intellectual poise of a scholar; on the other hand, she provides a series of lurid and slightly lascivious paintings of the Tarot deck that seem to belong in a sword-and-sorcery movie. Still, Walker succeeds in making the case for the authenticity and durability of the Tarot as a medium of religious expression: "Modern interpreters of the Tarot find in the archetypal concept a credible rationale for deriving valid insights from the cards," she concludes. "Part of the charm of Tarot cards lies in their fluid adaptability to any creative exposition, verbal or symbolic."

Once upon a time, when she still worked behind the counter at George Sand Books, Laurie Anne Fox resorted to a color photocopier to self-publish her whimsical but more than slightly bizarre reveries. Now she will reach a wider readership with **Sweeping Beauty or Notes on Cinderella** (Illuminati, 8812 Pico Blvd., Suite 203, Los Angeles 90035; $2.95), a distinctly modern retelling of the classic story of upward mobility: "Cinderella has read too much about irony and free will," writes Fox. "The girl wants out of the fairy tale." It's only one example of the delightful literary ephemera published by Illuminati, which also offers us the playful typographical exercises of Jay Dougherty's **Coveringdeertrackswithwords** ($2.95), **geography as poetry in Afghanistan** by Herbert Morris ($5; signed and numbered copy, $12.50), and the white-hot rock 'n' roll prose of Richard Meltzer and Nick Tosches in **Frankie, Part 1** ($1.50).

There's much more than the title implies in Joan M. Bergstrom's **School's Out—Now What? Creative Choices for Your Child** (Ten Speed, P.O. Box 7123, Berkeley 94707; $10.95). Don't look here for yet another catalogue of amusement parks or summer camps—"School's Out" is a thoughtful, sensitive and profoundly empowering study of how parents can "learn to strike a delicate balance between demanding too much and providing too little." Bergstrom has much to teach us about the philosophical underpinnings of parenthood, but she is relentlessly practical about it. She has sensible ideas on safety around the house, but she also pays attention to the challenge of striking up a conversation with a kid; she is equally concerned with organizing a child's household chores and providing time for "daydreaming, dressing up, getting into mischief." As a resource for parents, as an idea book for kids, as a survival tool for families, "School's Out" is simply superb.

When Arnold Genthe arrived in San Francisco in 1895, the wealthy young man from Hamburg carried a German guidebook that warned against visiting the Chinese quarter—or "Tangrenbu," as the enclave was called by its residents—"unless one is accompanied by a guide." But Genthe was undaunted, and he ventured into the neighborhood to capture its vivid street life in a series of 200 glass negatives. His work is assembled, thoughtfully annotated, and accompanied by authoritative essays in Genthe's **Photographs of San Francisco's Old Chinatown**, edited by John Kuo Wei Tchen (Dover; $8.95). "Arnold Genthe sought and found a certain poetic beauty in the streets of Chinatown," writes Tchen. "The honesty and directness of his best images take us beyond even Genthe's own limited knowledge of Tangrenbu to gain glimpses into the radiant souls of its residents."

NEW AND NOTEWORTHY: **The Complete Penguin Stereo Record and Cassette Guide**, edited by Edward Greenfield, Robert Layton and Ivan March (Penguin; $12.95) is a lucid, comprehensive and surprisingly readable catalogue of classical recordings, organized alphabetically by composer and describing nearly 5,000 records, cassettes and compact discs in short bursts of well-informed critical prose.

Paperback Best Sellers

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

MASS-MARKET (RACK-SIZE)

1 **Aquitaine Progression** by Robert Ludlum (Bantam) (1)
2 **Warday** by Whitley Strieber and James W. Kunetka (Warner) (7)
3 **Past Imperfect** by Joan Collins (Berkley) (9)
4 **Smart Women** by Judy Blume (Pocket) (2)
5 **Fame and Fortune** by Kate Coscarelli (NAL Books)
6 **The Wanton** by Rosemary Rogers (Avon) (6)
7 **The Danger** by Dick Francis (Fawcett) (4)
8 **Texas Rich** by Fern Michaels (Ballantine) (10)
9 **Mafia Princess: Growing Up in Sam Giancana's Family** by Antoinette Giancana and Thomas C. Renner (Avon)
10 **Lost Lady** by Jude Deveraux (Pocket)

The National Best-Seller List also includes **Almost Paradise** by Susan Isaacs (3), **Lord of the Dance** Andrew M. Greeley (5) and **Lace II** by Shirley Conran (8).

TRADE (LARGE-FORMAT)

1 **A Passage to India** by E. M. Forster (Harvest/Harcourt Brace Jovanovich)
2 **Garfield Makes It Big** by Jim Davis (Ballantine) (1)
3 **Stones for Ibarra** by Harriet Doerr (Penguin)
4 **Diets Don't Work** by Bob Schwartz (Breakthru/Publishers Group West) (4)
5 **The Road Less Traveled** by M. Scott Peck (Touchstone) (3)

The National Best-Seller List also includes **In Search of Excellence** by Thomas J. Peters and Robert H. Waterman (2) and **Heretics of Dune** by Frank Herbert (5).

The Southern California Paperback Best-Seller list is based on The Times' survey of regional bookstore chains and major paperback distributors. Placement on national list is based on surveys by Publishers Weekly and is noted in parentheses.

Current Paperback Reprints

Rude Assignment: An Intellectual Autobiography, Wyndham Lewis (Black Sparrow). First edition printed in its entirety reveals the workings of an independent mind.

The Glorious Cause: The American Revolution, 1763-1789, Robert Middlekauff (Oxford). Charting history from the 1763 Treaty of Paris and the growing conflict with England to the writing of the Constitution.

Woman's Experience of Sex, Sheila Kitzinger (Penguin). Covering the full range of female sexuality, from the act of sex to analyzing relationships and their loss.

Wolf Solent, John Cowper Powys (Harper & Row). Vividly romantic novel explores a man's re-encounter with his small hometown in Dorset, England.

Volcano, Shusaku Endo, translated from the Japanese by Richard A. Schuchert (Taplinger). Novel's characters struggle with their ethics and guilt while living under the shadow of a volcano.

Channels of Power: The Impact of Television on American Politics, Austin Ranney (Basic). Political scientist examines the bias and impact of the most pervasive media tool going.

The Reluctant Exhibitionist, Martin Shepard (Permanent). Disconcerting autobiography of a psychoanalyst who chose to reveal his life amid the profession.

The Politics at God's Funeral, Michael Harrington (Penguin). A search for another mechanism to provide the guidelines for modern social values.

The Early Diary of Anais Nin: Volume Three 1923-27, (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich). Records the early years of her marriage to Hugh Guiler and their life in Paris.

NEXT SUNDAY:

Jeffrey Moussaieff Masson, editor, **The Complete Letters of Sigmund Freud to Wilhelm Fliess** (Harvard)

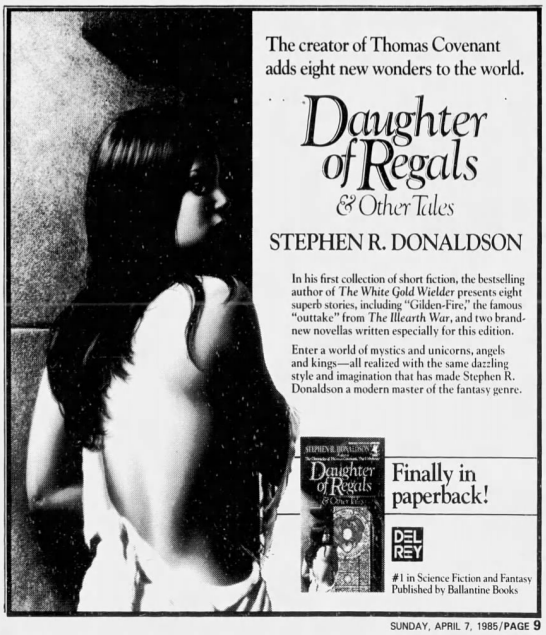
Paul Roazen, **A Psychoanalyst's Life** (Doubleday)

Marilyn Machlowitz, **Whiz Kids: Success at an Early Age** (Arbor House)

Allan Cox, **The Making of an Achiever** (Dodd, Mead)

Rebecca West, **This Real Night** (Viking)

Mary Gordon, **Men and Angels** (Random House)



Copyright © 2024 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.
Powered by Newspapers.com